Violence Against Aged Women in Slums of Agra: A Sociological Study

A SYNOPSIS
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Introduction

Aged women have faced marginalization since ages. Marginalization in term of economic deprivation, social isolation, skewed pattern of intra-familial adjustment or psychological stress. These components singularly and in totality compose violence. Violence has many forms: - physical, socio-cultural, economic and psychological. Socio- culture violence has not been clearly articulated in the literature concerning violence against aged women. Socio-culture violence means marginalization by family members, inadequate attention to the aged women, denying participation in community and group activities excluding is major decision making in this family matters and the like. During old age, men and women require care, affection and concern from the family members. Retirement from work does mean retirement from life. Aged women in the slums especially, are victims of exclusion, as they are unable to productively contribute to the family expenditure and their dependency ratio also increases, thereby leading to frustration and distress. This gets an expression, when aged women are abused and battered. They loose dignity and respect, when inactive, incoherent, dependent, and senile. The picture is built up by the moral, social and cultural values on the one hand and self-images and personality of the aged herself on the other. In Indian society the problem of violence against women is not new but it is new for aged women. The ever present fact of violence, overt and covert, physical and non-physical has an alarming influence on the status of women. Low income is one of the main causes of violence against aged women. But low income men fare better than low income and upper income women. Aged women suffer more than aged man. Today in our society women are vulnerable to all sorts of exploitation, molestation, violence and even fatal assaults.

The Three Sub Groups of Aged

The aged population in India, when categorized in terms of the three age groups as per the Census of 2001, demonstrates the following picture:

PERCENTAGE OF AGED PERSONS TO TOTAL POPULATION BY SEX			
	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL		
AGE GROUPS	PERSONS	MALE	FEMALE
60-69 Years	4.5	4.3	4.7
70-79 Years	2.1	2.0	2.1
80+ Years	0.3	0.3	0.3
TOTAL	**6.9**	**6.6**	**7.1**

Source: -Yojna November 2011.

Violence is an extreme form of aggression, such assault or murder. Violence has many causes, such as frustration, media, exposure to violence in the home or neighborhood and a tendency to see other peoples actions as hostile even when they're not, certain situations also increase the risk of aggression, such as drinking, insults and other provocations and environmental factors like heat and overcrowding.

Violence against aged women to a larger extent depends poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, lack of proper space in house. The Aged women of slums are the most vulnerable to violence. They do not have proper caring, food, medical facility. After all, they are the victim of familial violence, torture and oppression.

A slum is a compact settlement with a collection of poorly built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions. Such an area is considered as "non notified slum" if at least 20 households lived in that area. Area notified as slums by the respective municipalities, corporations, local bodies or development authorities are treated as "notified slums".

UN-HABITAT defines a slum household as a group of individuals living under the same roof in an urban area who lack one or more of the following:
Durable housing of a permanent nature that protects against extreme climate conditions.
Sufficient living space which means not more than three people sharing the same room.
Easy access to safe water in sufficient amounts an affordable price.
Access to adequate sanitation in the form of a private or toilet shared by a reasonable number of people. Source- Habitat.press@unhabitat.org,Website:www.unhabitat.org.

Page (2007) says that slums are site of poverty, yet they are also marked by inequality and differentiated economic and social status and while higher concentrations of dalit and most backward class (MBC) people may be found in slums than other areas, slums are not exclusively made up of these lower castes.

Review of Literature

This area is neglected by the researches. Yet the researcher has tried to review the available literature on the aged women**.**

Aged Women & Socio- Economic Problems

Roy (2010) points out that is it possible to recover the histories of gender for early India? How can gender analyses enrich our understanding of early India today? Drawing upon a range of textual traditions, this unique collection examines the significance of gender in the reconstruction of India's past. It goes beyond the simple binaries of a 'high' or 'low' status for women to explore the diversities and complexities of gender relations in early India. Roy draws attention to distinct strategies through which identities of men and women were constituted. She presents a gendered analysis of institutions and processes, ranging from the household to urbanism to denunciatory traditions to show how they remain critical for an understanding of early Indian history. The book also highlights the ways in which rituals were used for socialization as well as evidence for the subversion of the normative traditions. The author explores classic sastras—Manusmrti and Kama Sutra along with a range of Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Pali literature, including texts and inscriptions—as much for what they expressly state as for their implications, tensions, and inconsistencies. She shows how such textual traditions were informed and structured by prevailing notions and conceptions of power.

Kujur and Ekka (2010) states that the older population of India, which was 56.7 million in 1991, is 76 million in 2001 and is expected to grow to 137 million by 2021. Today India is home to one out of every ten senior citizens of the world. Both the absolute and relative size of the population of the elderly in India will gain in strength in future. Women's economic position depends largely on marital status, women who are widowed and living alone are found to be the worst among the poor and vulnerable. The needs and problems of the elderly vary significantly according to their age, socio– economic status, health, living status and other such background characteristics. The prospect of loneliness often accompanies the process of aging. Aging also hardens the likes and dislikes of a person his or her prejudices, perceptions and value judgments that refuse to acknowledge the reality of aging. Vulnerable groups like the disabled, fragile older persons, and those who work outside the organized sector of employment like landless agricultural workers, small and marginal farmers, artisans in the informal sector, unskilled laborers on daily, casuals or contract basis, migrant laborers, informal self-employed or wage workers in the urban sector, and domestic workers deserve mention here. All states governments and union territories have their own schemes for old aged and the criterion of eligibility and the quantum of pension amount vary among these states. The average old age pension which is nearly Rs.150 per month was below the average per capita income per Indian. The percentage of elderly who benefited from the old age pension scheme varies across states, with the minimum of 0.3 percent to 68 percent. As on 1999, a total amount of Rs. 227 millions was spend to benefit 49 lakh beneficiaries among the elderly.

Turlapati (2011) states that the level of life satisfaction among the elderly and to identify its determinants and conceptualize the implications for social work practice with the elderly in urban settings. Life satisfaction of the elderly – an effective variable was studied in relation to a set of cause variables using the property disposition approach of social research. Standardized scales were used to measure the key variables. In this work Turlapati includes many review of literature. Further he writes that older individuals between 50 -70 years of age, results indicated decline of life satisfaction around the 55^{th} year and also beyond the 61^{st} year and improvement in between these. He argued that the first decline may be due to retirement effects and the later life decline due to psychological and physical effects of old age. In this study, life satisfaction of elderly an effect variable was studied in relation to a set of cause variable using the property disposition approach of social research. The data was produced from the Election commission of India, Andhra Pradesh, on a compact disk, and was analyzed with the aid of the Microsoft Excel Software Package. Split half reliability test was applied to assess the reliability of the instrument and it was found that all the scales included were reliable such as life satisfaction, physical and psychological health, loneliness, social supports, spiritual well- being scale.

Dandekar (1996) states that elderly women face a variety of problems including economic, health, non-working status, lack of independence, clash of lifestyles, generation gap and so on. Do these problems differ in rural areas and big cities? What is the extent of their health problems

and financial stringency? Has India as a welfare any programs and policies directed to ameliorate the condition of the fast increasing numbers of the elderly? Today the demographic picture is very strange in India.

Sethi (1999) states that the socio-economic and political processes in the world impinge upon the day – to – day lives of individuals and households. While adopting them, the communities and cultures get transformed. The mechanisms though which the people respond to their challenges are of increasing interest to social scientists and researcher. Global strategies ignore the unequal power relation between people and this socio-cultural diversity. Disparities are the distribution of global economic resources and opportunities give rise to the question as to who will protect the interests of the poor and underprivileged sections of society. The dominance of the multinational corporation, international capital over market resources and labour within the developing countries has weakened the capacity of nation – states and governments top protect the interests of elderly women.

Mann (2001) keeps some questions such as we are all approaching retirement but what should we expect? For some, it is a happy prospect. Others approach retirement knowing they face hardship and social exclusion. Amid alarming predictions of a 'demographic time bomb', governments and the private pensions industry urge everyone to plan and save now, but admit that there are risks. But will the pension funds deliver on their promises? Will the rich increasingly retire early but the poor work for longer? How reliable are state pension schemes? Does the USA, Sweden, or Australia have a 'better' approach to retirement pensions than the UK ? Approaching retirement tackles these and many other questions from a number of sociological perspectives. Using the idea of the social division of welfare as a template, different approaches to retirement pension's policy are assessed and their strengths and weaknesses clearly presented. This book will be an invaluable resource for social science students at all levels and for those who teach them. Economists and pension practitioners will also find food for thought here.

Datta (2002) point out issues concerning elderly women in India is an area of increasing concern for many reasons. (Men are 100 on 91women) for the 60+ population was 91:100 and it reduced to 81 in the 80+ population. Around 75 per cent men in the age group of 60+ were currently married as compared to 42 women in the same age category. Life expectancy at the age of 60 year (2000- 2050) was 16 year for men as compared to 18 for women. The implication of this is feminization of the ageing population. In the coming years, these women will form a segment of society that will be completely dependent on members of their family and community for survival. Their dependence will be qualitatively different from that of ageing males for the simple reason of socially and culturally induced dependence on males. In rural areas, the proportion of older persons has increased from 7.1 percent (1991) to 7.7 percent (2001). Most women in India live in the shadow of their male relatives throughout their lives – father, husband, son, nephew brother, or uncle. In most cases, they do not earn money, and even when

they do, their employment is often guided by family considerations so that most of them take up casual employment or underemployment so that they can shoulder their family responsibilities. Most of the women do not own property, and even when they do not manage it. They are completely dependent on the male members of the family for the fulfillment of all their basic needs. They cannot even go to the local doctor without a male relative accompanying them, even when they are fit to move around. With age, this dependence increases. Besides, it is culturally accepted that women are the nurtures and caregivers for the family and, in the process neglect themselves. Irrespective of class, qualification, educational background and marital status, elderly women face an emotional void in their life. Almost all women in India lead a family-centric life – their world revolves around their family: when they get old, they get sidelined by the same family because it no longer requires their services. As their children grow up and marry, their position and status in the family deteriorates even further. The elderly lady loses her status in the family due to the assertion of her right by the daughter-in-law to manage the household as she wants. Differences of opinion on seemingly minor matters like observance of religious taboos on food; lifestyle etc. might become irreconcilable. They are considered to be "too interfering" and too demanding" by the family and often confined to a corner of the house. It is common to find elderly women complaining about blaring music, meat eating on certain auspicious days.

Das and Khawas (2009) states that aged women in India is an area of increasing concern. Firstly, in 2002, the sex ratio for the 60+ population was 91:1000 and it reduced to 81 in the 80+ population. Around 75 percent men in the age group of 60+ were currently married as compared to 42 women in the same age category. Life expectancy the age of 60 year (2000-2050) was 16 years for men as compared to 18 for women. The implication of this is feminization of the ageing population. In the coming years, these women will from a segment dependent on members of their family and/ or community for survival. Their dependence will be qualitatively different from that of ageing males for the simple reason of socially and culturally induced dependence on males. The ideas in this book will be especially helpful for examining male – female dependence in a patriarchal culture, especially when the dependence of aged women on male members increase with increase in ageing. He further found that one six of the older working class persons reported that had no good friend where as 25% of the lower class and 44% of the working class older people reported having more than ten good friends. Participation of elderly in community activities political programs is closely related to social and economic status at all stages of life cycle.

Clarke (2010) examines the relationship between aged women and ageing pours. The women in the book express discontent about their ageing visage. They also emphasize the importance of functional abilities and suggest that appearance become less central in later life. Drawing on in-depth interviews conducted over a ten year period, Clark brings alive feminist theories about ageing, feminist, and the body. The book also discusses medicine theories about ageing, feminist,

and the body. The book also discusses medicine and the ageing process. This book makes an important and timely contribution to the discussion of ageism and older women's experiences of growing older in a youth obsessed culture.

Aged Women and Adjustment Problem

Panigrahi (2013) states that this article an attempts has been made to look into the living arrangements patterns of the elderly and their determinants by considering two states in India namely Utter Pradesh and Kerala. The major data source for this paper is, from the census of India and NSS (National sample survey) 60^{th} round have been used. In total there are 34,831 aged (age 60 year and above) persons were interviewed in the 60^{th} round of the survey, of which 4,715 and 1766 aged persons are from the state multi-variety statistical techniques have been used for data analysis. From the analysis it is found the high proportions of aged are in co residence. Mostly the residence is with spouse and other members (47.2%) or without spouse but with children 932.6%). However, there is significant proportions (16%) of elderly are either living alone and with spouse only. It is interesting to find the living arrangements of elderly which is broadly based on the background characteristics of the aged. The living arrangements of aged are varies with age, gender, marital status, number of surviving children, and level of education, occupation and economic dependency. From the logistic regression analysis it is found that those elderly are male having surviving children and economically dependent on others. There is no significant difference in living arrangement and aged in utter Pradesh and Kerala. This study brought out suitable policy and suggestions for strengthening the welfare of the elderly through their living arrangements of elderly in Utter Pradesh and Kerala. This study brought out suitable policy and suggestions for strengthening the welfare of the elderly through their living arrangements.

Aged Women and Gender Difference

Arber and Ginn (1991) examine the significance of gender differences among the aged and the key factors influencing dependence and independence. This book explores ageism and stereotypes, and focusing on continuity and change in culture image of elderly women and relating them to the gendered nature of power in society. They address gender difference in later life by assessing the distributions of the promote independence. 3 key resources are shown to from an interlocking triangle, financial and material circumstances, health and access to domestic and personal care. A sophistical analysis is developed to explain how those resources interact to influence the individual's level of independence and well-being in later life. From this, elderly women emerge as significantly disadvantaged. The authors conclude that changes in policy and attitudes to counter women's disadvantage and foster this empowerment would not only be just, last could benefit the whole society.

Aged Women and Psychological Problems

Nuland (2006) explore the impact of ageing on our minds and bodies, strivings and relationships. Melding a scientist's passion for truth with a humanist's understanding of the heart and soul, Nuland has created a wise, frank, and inspiring book about the ultimate stage of life's journey. The onset of ageing can be so gradual that we are often surprised to find that one day it is fully upon us. The changes to the senses, appearance, reflexes, physical endurance, and sexual appetites are undeniable and rarely welcome and yet, as Nuland shows, getting older has its surprising blessings. Age concentrates not only the mind, but the body's energies, leading many to new sources of creativity, perception, and spiritual intensity. Growing old, Nuland teaches us, is not a disease but an art and for those who practice it well, it can bring extraordinary rewards. Nuland portrays the astonishing variability of the ageing experience. Faith and inner strength, the deepening of personal relationships, the realization that career does not define identity, the acceptance that some goals will remain unaccomplished; these are among the secrets of those who age well. Will scientist one day fulfill the dream of eternal youth? Nuland examines the latest research into extending life and the scientist who are pursuing it. But ultimately, what compels him most is what happens to the mind and spirit as life researches its culminating decades. Reflecting the wisdom of a long lifetime, The Art of Aging is a work of luminous insight, unflinching candor, and profound compassion.

Aged Women and Violence

Cherian (2011) point out that in India women are soft target for criminal elements. According him National Population Commission has estimated that the population of the aged (age group 60 years and above). He noted that old persons have become soft targets for criminal elements. They also became victims of fraudulent dealings and of physical and emotional abuse within the household by family members to force them to part with their ownership rights. Women form majority of population ageing; they are more vulnerable, more likely to lack modern work skills, more likely to lack income security, and more likely to be widowed. The NGOs in ageing are far and few. The problems are huge and there is still much more which needs to be done.

Aged Women& Violence Against Women in Slums

Mahalick (2005) states that in spite of hallowed tradition of respecting our women, there has been constant on slough on their lives and liberties. There are many crimes against them such as burning, harassment, rape, and desertion. Some husbands in slums are as desert their wives in a helpless condition. While their wives lead a miserable condition with their children, they lead a happy life by getting remarried to some other women. Such cases are quite different from the system of upper class and middle class society. Who can get legal separation of their rights ? This is the root cause of their misfortunes. Generally most of the couples of slums are low paid workers; they languish in conditions of poverty and deprivation. The men cannot full fill the assurance of providing food and other necessities required for the life of their wives. The

situation remains a dream due to acute poverty. Consequently the men choose the safest way of deserting their families and develop illicit relationship with other women living in the same slum of some other slums and get remarried.

John (2013) states that the nature and value of women's labour in modern India. The first part of the article offers a theoretical overview of the issue involved, arguing for an intersectional framework that would reorient a focus on women through questions of gender, class, and caste. Issues relating to the prominence of the domestic sphere, stigma and public labour. The second part of the article uses the method of exploring women's life narratives or autobiographies to investigate this problem through the places occupied by labour in a life story, drawing on the writings of Rashundari Debi, Binodini Dasi, Baby Kamble, Baby Haldar and Nalini Jameela. The third part of conflicts that structure women's relationship in the world of labour and on the further questions this raises for feminist analysis.

The literature reviewed so far, does not take up the issue of social mobility, autonomy and sufferings experienced by elderly against the violence. Thus the researcher takes up this study.

Statement of the Problem

Violence against aged women has become a regular feature in the Indian society across caste, class and cultural variations "violence" becomes all the more pronounced when aged women are at its receiving end more so in the slums dwellings. Violence as an act would refer to the use of force, intended to hurt, physically, psychologically or emotionally. Aged women in the slums are malnourished, emotionally possessed and psychologically distressed. These women at the twilight years of their life find it difficult to adjust in their own families. Derivate in socio-economic terms is characterized as the violence faced by aged women. Health problem and lack of proper centers of care make the plight of widowed aged women worse as they are not in a position to exercise their agency in the family, or contribute economically. The logical result is social marginalization, which can also be referred to as social violence. Sociological research needs to be drawing to the causes and consequences of violence faced aged women in the slums dwellings as it is significant area of research.

Significance of the Study

The problems of aged women in slums has been a neglected area of research. The significance lies in the fact that weak and marginalized aged women need attention. The significance of the problem also lies in the fact that most studies on aged concentrate on their psychological or biological problems. But not much study have been conducted on violence against aged women in slums. It is an emerging area of concern in sociological literature. Suffering of violence against aged women in slums requires societal concern and formulation of policy by the government. Violence against aged women in slums will open a new area of research in sociology. So topic has been chosen to add a new dimension to sociological literature and finally suggest measures to improve the conditions of aged women in the slums.

Objectives

The main objective of present research work is to study the violence against aged women in slums of Agra.

Other objectives of the study are as follow:-

1) To study the socio-economic background of aged women who are victim of violence in slums of Agra.
2) To find out the causes of violence faced by the aged women in the slums of Agra.
3) To explore the nature and degree of violence against aged women in the slums of Agra.
4) To study the societal and governmental concerns for the aged women in the slums of Agra.
5) To suggest measures to improve the conditions of aged in slums.

Hypotheses

On the basis of literature, and personal experience as a member of community the researcher has formulated the following hypotheses:-

1) The socio-economic background of aged women in slums of Agra is very low.
2) Social dependency and tolerance of aged women in their family members are the major causes of violence faced by the aged women in the slums of Agra
3) Aged women face emotional and physical violence in the slums of Agra.
4) The society and government is least concern about the issues of aged women in the slums of Agra.

Operationalization of Concepts

Aged women – Above 60 years of age treated as an aged woman.

Violence –Violence is an act of physical, emotional, economic, socio-cultural abuse by one or more individual or other.

Slums – Slum as "residential areas which are physically and socially deteriorated and in which satisfactory family life is impossible".

Research Methodology

Universe and Sample

All the aged women living in 183 slums of Agra will constitute the universe of study.

10% slums (18 in number) will be selected randomly from the list produced from Nagar Nigam office of Agra.

Census of selected 18 slums will be carried.

Research Design

The research design will be Exploratory and Descriptive.

Area of the Study

18 slums of Agra will be area of the study.

Unit o the Study

The unit of the study will be aged women (the age of 60+) of slums.

Tools of Data Collection

Schedulewill be used for the collection of primary data. The interview schedule will be divided into four parts- (1) Part will comprise questions concerning the biography of aged women in slums of Agra. (2) Part will comprise questions concerning the socio-economic background of the aged women in slums of Agra. (3) Part will comprise questions concerning the causes of violence faced by the aged women in slums. (4) Part will deal in questions concerning the nature and degree of violence against the aged women in the slums of Agra.

Sources of Data

Both primary as well as secondary data will be used.

Primary data will be conducted from interview schedule and case study.

Secondary data will be conducted from books, journals, e-libraries, newspapers, magazines and Census Survey Report.

Statistical Method

Chi- square statistical method will be used.

Tentative Chapterization

1. Introduction

(a) Context

(b) Review of Literature

(c) Theoretical Framework

(d) Statement of the Problem

(e) Significance of the Problem

(f) Objectives of the study

(g) Hypotheses of the study

(h) Operationalization of the concepts

(i) Methodology

(j) Universe and Sample

(k) Statistical Method, Data Processing and Analysis

2. Profile of the Respondents.

3. Causes of Violence Against the Aged Women in the Slums of Agra.

4. Nature and Degree of Violence Against the Aged Women.

5. Field Experience, Suggestions for Improvement and Scope of the Study.

6. Summary and Conclusion

Appendices

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Glossary

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